

From: [Kelley, Mark](#)
To: [Rebecca Mayfield Ramsey](#)
Cc: [Lere, Mark](#)
Subject: Miller Ranch Project Letter of Support for Future Fisheries
Date: Wednesday, November 30, 2011 4:12:17 PM

Mr. Mark Lere

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Habitat Protection Bureau, Fisheries Division

1420 East 6th Avenue

P.O. Box 200701

Helena, MT 59620-0701

RE: Miller Ranch Ruby Restoration Future Fisheries Project

Dear Mark,

This letter is to provide support for the Miller Ranch Ruby River Channel Restoration project. The Ruby River provides an important recreational resource in southwest Montana; over 15,000 angler days are spent on this river each year. Projects that improve or maintain the high quality fish habitat and stream channels are of high importance to our agency and to the community in southwest Montana. Historic channel simplification resulting from channelization below Ruby Dam has compromised this segment's stream habitat and functions.

The Miller Ranch project seeks to reverse habitat simplification by restoring a natural river channel in a straitened and simplified reach, thereby providing both short and long term benefits to the fisheries and overall stream health in the Ruby River. I anticipate that this project will provide direct fisheries benefits by improving habitat quality and quantity, as well as sustaining channel complexity and sediment movement. The restoration design intends to restore diverse natural habitat features and, more importantly, long term natural habitat forming fluvial processes. Because this project will also increase channel length, there will be a direct net increase in habitat resulting from this project. Since the Miller family provides reasonable public access and this site is located proximal to an existing public fishing access site, I would anticipate that there will be direct public benefits realized from this project immediately upon completion and well into the future.

As you know, DEQ has issued our agency's 319 Grant Program's Intent to Award letter toward funding significant portions of this channel restoration work. I am committed to insuring that this work can move forward towards a successful conclusion. Because of the strong landowner commitment and expected public benefit of this project, I encourage you to consider and support this proposal for funding. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Mark D. Kelley

Water Quality Specialist

Montana DEQ